

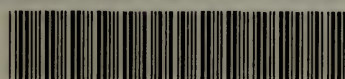
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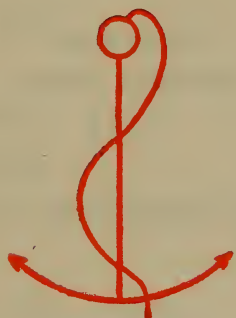
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SONGS OF THE SUSQUEHANNA

SONGS OF THE
SUSQUEHANNA BY
FREDERIC BRUSH



PORTLAND MAINE
THE MOSHER PRESS
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SONG OF THE HUNTED



SONG OF THE HUNTED



WAKE, awake, and the sun-kiss take !

Open the cave-dulled eye,
Sport freely in the open,
Let out the wild woods cry.

He came to snare,

He came to kill,

He of the iron arm and will ;

But under the cliff he lieth still,

And no one saw him die.

Leap ! breast and cleave the frosty air !

Beat the blue lakes to foam.

Tell all the young in nest and lair

The highland yet is home.

He came to kill,

He came to snare,

But the gray fox found him lying there,

And all dark red was his matted hair,—

Roam, ye of the forest, roam.

Then awake, awake, and the sun-kiss take !

We have turned the evil thing.

No beast shall drag the red leg home,

No bird the broken wing.

He came to maim,

He came to kill,

He of the iron arm and will ;

But under the cliff he lieth still,

And no one saw him die.

THE GIRL AT THE MILL

THE GIRL AT THE MILL

ALISON of Manatoom
Heard the waters sith and fall
Down the old flume's mossy length
 To the ruined wall ;
Heard the spray-fog drip and drip
 From the mouldering undersill,
Till with the evening shadows came
 The Spirit of the mill :

“ Alison, Alison,
 So life's stream doth run and run.
Give — love and give, nor count each cost ;
For love alone is never lost.”

Alison sat very still
 And felt her heart's blood pause and flow ;
It was as if a hundred years
 There did come and go.
Alison sat very straight
 And tried to know what she heard,
Straining to catch from out the mist
 Again the whispered word.

“ Alison, Alison,——”

She was too young to hear and know,
Too old to laugh and go away;
And so she sat beside the mill
And listened every day.

Alison of Manatoom

Watching waters glide and fall
Heard once more from out the mist
The wandering Spirit call :

“ Alison, Alison,

Life and love and you are one.

Love — give and love, nor count each cost ;
For love alone is never lost.”

SPRING FLOOD

SPRING FLOOD

I RAISED her head upon the shore,
Until the bramble caught her hair.
Ah ! it was good to see the sky,
And taste the air.

The brown surge pressed her close to me ;
I had of strength to cling and live ;
Yet through my soul such music ran
As angels give.

Slowly the red blood filled her lips ;
She lived ! I wound a strand of hair
Around the precious willow stem,
And kissed her there.

I sometimes wish the tugging flood
Had loosed me then and borne me down.
It were not bad at life's full tide
To kiss and drown.

For when with first inquiring breath
She called another's name that day,
I knew that I was out upon
A long new way.

TWO IN A VALLEY

TWO IN A VALLEY

WE worked for years together by the streams
That grind and shift the glittering sands of gain.
I called him friend, thinking I knew him, all —
His pleasure and his pain.

Then in the hour of flood and flame and fear,
With choice and chance and destiny at grips,
I broke through hedge and inner field to press
Life's tribute on his lips.

THE HILL BOY

THE HILL BOY

JOE JERRY hoed in a stony field,
Under a sweltering sun.
The boy and the rock and the native weed
Fought for the life in a battered seed,
And the struggle was just begun.

“Get out of the mud and follow me,”
Said the man with the better clothes.
“Against you are vermin and drouth and frost ;
You anger nature with labor lost —
Come where a fair wind blows.”

But the boy digged on in the stony field,
With the struggle barely begun.
“I put the seed in this ground,” said he ;
“I think I had better stay and see
Whatever may be done.”

Joe Jerry quarried and placed the stones
And fitted the timbers true.
Then neighbors came with fevered eyes :
“Gold ! — pans of gold — out there it lies !
Shall we wait a day for you ?”

A love-voice rifted the evening calm,
Singing the death of day.
A tired child came and went with a kiss.
“I have a wife, and a house — and this :
I think I had better stay.”

CANOE

CANOE

HEAVE along, heave along,
Swinging away from care and wrong,
Lift of love and the current strong
Bearing us on together.
Sway and dip down the eddying tide,
Graze the rock and laughing glide
Out on the foamy pool to ride
Light as a fallen feather.

Let eye meet with eye till fires
Flame and feed on new desires ;
And when the lingering kiss expires
Know that all worth knowing
Still eludes the bookman's quest —
O, ho ! he is seeking east and west.
Will he never turn to a throbbing breast ?
Nor follow the warm blood's flowing ?

Heave along, heave along,
To lift of love and the croon of song ;
Honor and youth and the current strong
Bearing us on together.
Drifting under the whispering boughs,
Speak the dream, though it end in vows ;
For the best to a man the earth allows
Is a maiden's heart in tether.

ON THE WAY

ON THE WAY

PASSION

THE past is dust of withered leaves.
Beyond, — beyond? Ah, Kiss.
All wealth and lore of ages lies
Here in the round depths of your eyes.
The proof the potion and the prize
Are in the hour — and this.

THE WORK

Cold, cold, my boy? The day is in the east.
Come, strive with me here on this ledge's top.
I am the giant Sloth; put forth your best
To hurl me over. Good! you weld and grow
Like the young oak; three years and I'll not say,
"Come, cast me off." Now like a man you glow;
No borrowed fitful flare from torch or sun,
But inner heat that follows act and breeds
The greater action — inner fire that lights
The way to make the morning dream the fact.

The sun now through the flexure of the hills
Pours his red life along the valley floor;
And every flower from the deep rest of night
Rises jewel-crowned to meet the day's emprise.

How the light smiles upon that crescent plain
Beyond the river ; there lies truth for dream.
Ten years ago — another morn like this —
I stood alone upon this height and saw,
Where the corn glistens and the soft grain waves,
The dark, miasmal tangle of the swamp ;
Looked through myself into the years, and warmed ;
Watched the foul mists arise — and dreamed the dream

And I have lived this decade — have found life,
Making it leap across the desert's edge,
Urging a better kind into the marsh ;
Lived in the deed (in heaven maybe) and felt
The old unrest go off like summer rain.
Through the crushed embers of the passion fires,
Stronger with years the light of deep love glows ;
And all the dissevering forces of hot youth
Bend to the current of the common good.

O Time, go lingeringly ! I have been given
The place, the eye to see, the love, the will.
There where the stream roars down the rift and eats
Into the mellow bank the mill shall rise,
The quick wheels sing a worthier song, and lights
Flame in the far-off village, dimmed eyes smile
And youth bend readier to the wisdomed page.
Till you, alone — another morn like this —
Shall see the hamlet spreading on the plain,

And hear the brave bells calling through the hills
The message of the broader, kindlier life.

The moment glows. My soul mounts up and calls
For holiday and song, and yet — the work ;
It lies there in the valley, and we go.
For this may be the white high day of life,
The richest, or the holiest — or the last.

EVENING

Then gently as the bells are rung
And the tired questers gather home,
The old day spreads upon our lives
Its monochrome.

MARSH CHILD

MARSH CHILD

FAIR Colyn 's agoing to sleep
Down where the little may-frogs peep.
Where the waters dimly creep,
Sweet Colyn is going to sleep.

There the pale-eyed pickerel lads
Doze beneath the lily pads;
And fifteen hundred frogs or so
Have no other place to go.

Within the old stump's hollow cup
All night the waves go plup—plup—plup.
And when the sky is clouded o'er
Sometimes you hear the hornpouts snore.

Hark, Colyn ! Along the grass
I hear the whispering marsh-breeze pass.
It wanders off across the hill,
And now the very stars lie still.

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THE LITTLE BROTHER'S RIDE

THE LITTLE BROTHER'S RIDE

A BALLAD OF THE ALLEGHANIES

“WAKE, Homer, wake ! your clothes are warmed ;
Your father brings the red mare down ;
And you must ride by Mount Malone
For William Bain of Travortown.

“Quick, boy ! it is your sister Nell.
Drink this hot tea to make you bold.
I hear the red mare at the door,
And 't is black dark and growing cold.”

They tied the tippet round his neck ;
They placed him on the sorrel mare.
He spoke no word nor turned about,
But straight into the dark did stare.

‘Now ride her fair to Mount Malone,
And lightly till the road bends down ;
Then ride her for your sister's life —
If she drops dead in Travortown.”

“And go to William Bain and say,
Our sick Nell swoons and waits to die.
She calls for him with her last breath.
‘Bring William Bain,’ is all her cry.”

The mother sobbed when he was gone.
“He looked so small and white,” she said;
Then wiped the tears and smiled and went
To watch beside the daughter’s bed.

He rode her fairly to the height,
Where from the cliffs the hoot-owl called.
Black shadows leapt across the path,
And once o’erhead the wildcat squalled.

He rode her lightly through the woods
To where the road bends to the plain,
Then broke a bough from overhead
And wound his left hand in her mane.

The watchdog howled, and he was gone.
The startled sleepers woke in dread:
“Who rides like that to Travortown
Rides side by side with fear,” they said.

“Who rides like that through this dark night
Hears moans, or sees a fresh wound bleed.
One of three loads is on his heart —
Stayed birth, or death, or some foul deed.”

So Homer rode by farm and wood.
He had no need of whip or word.
The red mare felt the fear that clung,
And knew the hope that in him stirred.

They heard the village clock strike twelve,
The village lights were in their eyes,
When, struggling up the last long hill,
She staggered down and did not rise.

“My sister Nell is sick to die,
And I am come for William Bain.”
“He’s at the home of Edna Hale
Where yonder light gleams in the lane.”

He found the house of Edna Hale,
And two that stood within the shade.
They drew and kissed a fond good night,
And still to kiss again they stayed.

“I come for you, I come for you,
Our Nellie faints and waits to die.
She calls for you with her last breath, —
‘Bring William Bain,’ is all her cry.”

Along the lonely homeward way
The little brother stumbled back.
Strange voices whispered from the trees,
And gray shapes thronged the forest track.

The morning frost lay on the fields
When he came down by Mount Malone.
They heard the low knock at the door
And found him lying on the stone.

The mother claspt him to her breast,
 "Ah, God ! how small and white !" she said.
He moaned as one in fever-sleep,
 "Is Nellie dead ? Is Nellie dead ?"

The mother kissed thro' her own tears.
 "She only lives to greet the morn.
Her hand in William Bain's is laid.
 She dies as pure as she was born."

The boy sprang up as from a sleep
 And cried as with a sudden pain,
Then ran into the deathbed room
 And struck the arm of William Bain.

And took his sister's hand and stood
 Breathless as she, and all as pale.
"I found him by her door," he cried.
 "I found him kissing Edna Hale."

"Oh boy, oh boy ! what have you done ?
 You 've killed her now, you 've killed her now.
She breathes no more — she breathes no more ;
 The death-sweat gathers on her brow."

But slow the stricken girl rose up,
 And life-fire gleamed within her eye.
As from the grave they heard her voice :
 "I will not die.—I will not die."

The life-fire burned in her wan cheek,
And slow and solemn came her cry :
“Go back, go back to Edna Hale —
The brother saves. I will not die.”

By the new love that wakes the will,
And will that lifts the sinking heart,
All by the little brother's ride
She lived to do the woman's part.

FRIEND

FRIEND

AS I staid hopeless by the yellow mounds,
Where all the garner of the bright years lay,
He came, and saying nothing did my work
As 't were a common day.

When the slow season turned again he came
And led me up where far the river gleamed,
Telling for hours of things that were to be
Better than youth had dreamed.

Till last the sun shone on our mount alone,
And the old truth in bannered flame unfurled :
The dark is rest, and ever sweeps the day
Over a better world.

O Friend, you are the greatest gift. When fall
The chill gray shadows on the path of life,
You come, and bring the love of each and all —
Child, mother, brother, wife.

WHEN WINTER COMES

WHEN WINTER COMES

WHEN winter comes the music of the woods,
Save some far-carrying cry
From out the wildest deeps,
Sinks suddenly into an icy sigh
And Nature sleeps.

When winter comes the gleaming rivulet,
That all the summer long
From underneath the hill
Sent up unpraised its daily gift of song,
Is hid and still.

When winter comes a silence broods and falls,
As into death. Bend low
And listen : ah, there rings
Through frosted forest-aisles cadences low.
The brook still sings.

When winter comes upon my head and thine,
With peace and childhood near,
And hope in sunset skies ;
The few who bend and listen still may hear
Faint melodies.



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